



Statement of Senator Feinstein on the Passage
of Legislation to Reform the Intelligence Community
December 8, 2004

“Congress will give its final approval today for landmark legislation fundamentally reforming the structure of America’s intelligence services. This law will make consequential changes to the structure and organization of the 15 agencies which make up our intelligence capabilities.

It is the culmination of years of hard work, and represents a historic step in the effort to protect America from the asymmetric threats facing our nation in the 21st century.

This law addresses what I believe to be the single greatest flaw in the structure of the Intelligence Community – the lack of a single, full-time leader, with the strategic, budget, and personnel authority to organize and direct the 15 agencies and departments which make up the Intelligence Community.

I have felt for several years that this is a necessary step. That’s why I introduced legislation in 2002 and 2003 to create a Director of National Intelligence. I was delighted to see that it was a main part of the 9/11 Commission’s report and represents the centerpiece of the legislation we are passing today.

The two parts of the bill that are before us – the strong Director of National Intelligence and the Counter Terrorism Center – are the bulwark of intelligence reform. I am very pleased that we have been able to accomplish this. It is now the job of the intelligence committees to refine and add to this legislation, and provide the necessary oversight of its implementation.

I want to particularly commend Senators Collins and Lieberman. In an effort which exemplifies the Senate at its best, they worked in a collegial and bi-partisan manner to craft complex, and controversial, legislation. They were able to forge a consensus crossing party lines at a time of increasing political bitterness. I hope their effort is seen as an example of how we can get things done in the United States Senate.”

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